

REMARKS

The Office Action dated January 15, 2004 has been received and carefully noted. The following remarks are submitted as a full and complete response thereto. Claims 1-10 are pending in the above-cited application and are respectfully submitted for reconsideration.

Claims 1-3, 5 and 7-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over *Ahne et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,133,844) in view of *Naylor* (U.S. Patent No. 5,506,767). Claims 4 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over *Ahne et al.* and *Naylor* in view of *Ross et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,027,112). The above rejections are respectfully traversed because the cited references fail to teach or suggest all of the elements of the above claims.

The present invention is directed to a system and method for displaying system state information. The system of the present invention, according to independent claim 1, includes a programmable controller operative to determine the present system state of a system, the programmable controller operative to determine the present system state of the system, the programmable controller providing a signal representative of system state, a driver operative to generate a control signal in response to the signal provided by the programmable controller, and a display device operative to provide a visual representation of the state of the system in response to the control signal. The system has a plurality of ports, with at least one port of the plurality of ports providing at least one of the event signals, where the at least one event signal carries information on a status of the

at least one port with respect to transmission and receipt of data by the at least one port.

Claims 2-6 depend from claim 1.

The present invention, according to independent claim 7, is directed to a method of operating a display system. The method includes providing event signals representative of a condition of a system to a programmable controller, generating signals representative of system state in response to the event signals and displaying a visual representation of information representing system state in response to signals generated by the programmable controller. Claim 8 depends from claim 7.

The present invention, according to independent claim 9, is directed to a programmable display controller for controlling a display device based on event information indicative of a current one of a set of predefined states of a communication system. The programmable display controller includes a programmable controller responsive to programming information defining a selected display state associated with each of the states of the communication system, the programmable controller being operative to generate a control signal indicative of a current display state based on the current state of the communication system and said programming information. In both embodiments, the communication system has a plurality of ports, with at least one port of the plurality of ports providing at least one of the event signals, where the at least one event signal carries information on a status of the at least one port with respect to transmission and receipt of data by the at least one port. Claim 10 depends from claim 9.

The principle reference applied in the subject Office Action is *Ahne et al.* *Ahne et al.* is directed to a system and method for allowing a user to program characteristics of an LED in order to convey information about the operational status of a printer. The disclosure allows a user at a computer (20, Fig. 1) to program the LED (124-128) functions of the printer (10). The computer receives output status signals from the printer and transmits to an LED driver logic circuitry in the printer display mode information based upon how the computer has been programmed by the user.

The Office Action acknowledges that *Ahne et al.* fails to teach or suggest a drive operative to generate a control signal in response to the signal provided by a programmable controller and that the system of *Ahne et al.* does not have a plurality of ports receiving data information from a programmable controller.

In acknowledging that *Ahne et al.* fails to teach or suggest all of the elements of claims 1-3, 5 and 7-9, the Office Action cites *Naylor*. *Naylor* is directed to a universal controller providing the display of information with a variety of pre-selected output graphics and indicia, programmability to control a variety of processes and machines in a variety of applications with a variety of pre-selected input graphics and indicia, manufacturability as a standard unit in large numbers, variable programming for its different applications, and containability in a small, easily operated unit.

Claim 1 recites, in part, “wherein the system has a plurality of ports, with at least one port of the plurality of ports providing at least one of the event signals, where the at least one event signal carries information on a status of the at least one port with respect

to transmission and receipt of data by the at least one port.” Similar limitations can also be found in independent claims 7 and 9. The Office Action alleges that *Naylor* teaches an electronic system having a plurality of ports, but this does not appear to be correct. The rejection cites 11 A-P as being “ports”, but *Naylor* indicates that those elements are independently illuminatable areas of an operable variable illumination means 11. The cited portions appear to be merely display portions and are not ports within the common meaning of the word nor within the meaning used in the specification and claims of the instant invention. While it is acknowledged that that limitations in a claim can be given their broadest reasonable meaning, “no term may be given a meaning repugnant to the usual meaning of the term.” In re Hill, 161 F.2d 367, 73 USPQ 482 (CCPA 1947).

In *Naylor*, elements 11A-P are used to “display selected indicia” (column 3, line 15). In fact, nowhere in *Naylor* is there any discussion of ports or any equivalent thereof. The elements alleged to be ports in *Naylor* are not “a plurality of ports, with at least one port of the plurality of ports providing at least one of the event signals, where the at least one event signal carries information on a status of the at least one port with respect to transmission and receipt of data by the at least one port.”

As such, Applicants respectfully assert that *Ahne et al.* and *Naylor* cannot teach or suggest all of the elements of claims 1-3, 5 and 7-9, as has been asserted in the Office Action. For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the anticipation rejection.

Lastly, claims 4 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over *Ahne et al.* and *Naylor* in view of *Ross et al.* In the Office Action, *Ross et al.* was relied upon for its alleged teaching of a display system having a display area defined by an array of LEDs which form a matrix. Even if *Ross et al.* were accepted for what it is alleged to teach, *Ross et al.* fails to cure the deficiencies of *Ahne et al.* and *Naylor*, as discussed above. As such, Applicants respectfully assert that *Ahne et al.*, *Naylor* and *Ross et al.* cannot render obvious claims 4 and 6, as has been asserted in the Office Action. For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the obviousness rejection of claims 4 and 6.

In conclusion, Applicants respectfully request the allowance of claims 1-10 and that the application be allowed to proceed to issue. If for any reason the Examiner determines that the application is not now in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact, by telephone, the applicant's undersigned attorney at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this application.

In the event this paper is not being timely filed, the applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension together with any additional fees may be charged to Counsel's Deposit Account 50-2222.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin F. Turner', written over a horizontal line.

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